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VIP

Scrambled Sinatra And the GSA Scandals.

By Maxine Cheshire

Frank Sinatra, who has had reason in the past to suspect that the FBI and others might be listening when he and his friends talk on the phone, has reportedly bought three \$125,000 portable scrambling devices.

The equipment, outfitted into attache cases, is made by the Gretag company in Zurich, Switzerland.

President Carter has been using a similar American-made scrambler in his limousine—called a “digital voice privacy system”—since last year.

Carter's was installed by Motorola and scrambles his conversations on a frequency that is changed often for security reasons.

Only two people at Motorola know the frequency, a spokesman says, and they will be fired if the frequency gets out, even though would-be eavesdroppers still need a special decoder on the other end.

The sophisticated scrambler was designed by Motorola especially for the government.

Other top officials, including CIA director Stansfield Turner, also are already using the gadget.

They're not for sale to pimps and prostitutes, who are big customers for Motorola's standard car phones.

How does Motorola KNOW they're pimps and prostitutes, you ask?

“Because they always pay cash,” says the spokesman.